



STALKE OUT OF SPACE

From Himalaya to Hekla

**Lone Mertz
and Lawrence Weiner**

Stalke Out Of Space project no 25

Galleri Kambur, Iceland
2004

In 1983, Albert and I received a light blue envelope from New York. Inside the envelope, we found a small piece of pink tissue paper with a typewritten text on it. We knew that we had received a work of art from our friend Lawrence Weiner, no. 501 in the list of works. The work related to events from our common life, to our attachment to Northern Jutland. One night the three of us had stood at Grenen, the northernmost point in Denmark, and watched the seas from east and west meet under the starry sky. Yet the work pointed beyond this personal dimension toward the universal.

In the Box?

In the installation at Gallery Kambur, this work by Lawrence Weiner was placed centrally in the exhibition space, facing north. Toward the east and the west, I chose to open or unfold the Nomadic Box, the glass case that I had used when traveling in the East, on the walls. The 18 plates of Plexiglas had been replaced by 9 squares of mirror glass and 9 squares of dyed glass. The colors on the transparent glass squares related to the so-called Vedic squares that symbolized the nine planets. The story of the Glass Case was shown through a series of transparencies. It unfolded like a fairy tale, an allegory of reality, and it brought me great wonder and joy.

The Glass Case? A Ready-made Story?

Briefly, the story went as follows: I constructed the Glass Case by the sea at Glano Beach, close to my residence. The case was shattered to pieces in a storm a few months after its construction, and I decided to build a new one to be placed in the Himalayas.

The Nomadic Box

The 18 Plexiglas squares had holes in them and could be tied together. My mother sewed a square backpack, and like a soldier of fortune I was ready to set out with my special work of art on my back.

The First Tibetan Refugee Camp, Dhorpatan in Nepal

I experienced many things, much like in real fairy tales, but they all seemed to point in one direction. A Tibetan by the name of Karma pointed out the far-off refugee camp Dhorpatan in the western part of Tibet to me. That was the camp where the first refugees had settled in the early 1960s, trying to escape the Chinese seizure of power and to save their religious identity. Out there, many days of travel by foot lay ahead, five or six hundred people at a time. Most of them were old, worn, poor, but friendly. They longed for home while pointing toward the north, where the white

summits of the Himalayas rose against the sky. Thirty years before, they had crossed the mountains on a three-month-long and indescribably exhausting journey. Everyone had lost family members—children and elderly people—during this migration from Tibet.

The Nomadic Box by the Convent

At the refugee camp, I built the Nomadic Box by the convent. It stood there for a couple of days as the object of close scrutiny by everyone around. The women collected the pieces of rubber bands and tape that were left over from the construction. Everything could be reused, and I felt the absurdity of my enterprise out here in the wilderness.

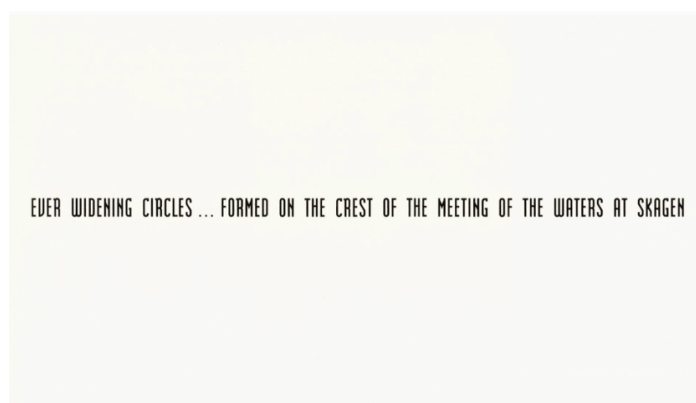
The Flags of Prayer: A Yellow One for the Earth, a White One for the Water, a Red One for the Fire, a Green One for the Air, and a Blue One for the Sky

Nevertheless, the old monk, who had been the leader during the escape from Tibet, offered to help me place the box at a height above 4,000 meters. From this point, it was possible to survey the pass that the refugees had crossed. The day before we packed our bags for the trip, the doctor lama dressed in red brought me some red flags of prayer. They were handed over to me accompanied by a sentence in English that he had learned by heart.

“Tell her? For us Tibetans, life was all about transforming the physical body into a radiant rainbow in death.”



Lone Mertz and Lawrence Weiner, From Himalaya to Hekla, Stalke Out Of Space / Galleri Kambur, Iceland.



Lawrence Weiner, Galleri Kambur/Stalke Out Of Space



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Lone Mertz in front of Galleri Kambur, 2004